

# PRESERVING TRADITIONAL LANDSCAPES

CIAV ANNUAL CONFERENCE

2 – 8 December 2007, Banaue, Ifugao Province, Philippines



*Photos of Ifugao Traditional Landscapes by MJBMananghaya*

Traditional landscapes are a product of nature and people. They are inextricably linked with cultural traditions that make possible the creation of tangible cultural manifestations seen in architecture.

Some traditional associated landscapes associated are created through the interaction of man with nature. Others are produced within an urban context and some continuously exist in their traditional form to the present times, despite having succumbed to urban progress and modernization.

Unless touched by the influences of current global changes, most traditional landscapes that have been developed in natural environments persist in their original, traditional state. In this instance, the tangible cultural manifestations that are associated with these landscapes such as vernacular architecture are preserved in their original form.

In the context of the urban environment, the tangible traditional manifestations of traditional landscapes sometimes persistently retain their traditional form while the people and the culture associated with them develop into a different level of character. In some cases, despite the changes within their urban context, traditional landscapes survive by surprisingly evolving into new forms and functions that keep them viable in the light of their cultural significance.

In most cases however, unless these landscapes are located in remote, inaccessible areas, they ultimately disappear due to modernization, most especially with the present trends in urban development, tourism, culture change, technological advancements, and the changing global perspective.

The question is how traditional landscapes and vernacular architecture will be affected by ecological, cultural and technological changes that have taken effect in the 20<sup>th</sup> and the 21<sup>st</sup> century. How will traditional landscapes respond, adapt, or whether they will ultimately be forced to disappear in the light of 21st century realities? How does tourism impact on fragile traditional landscapes? What type of sustainable economic activity programs can give stakeholders incentive to preserve their landscape while using it as a resource for income generation?

The main theme of the conference is “The Preservation of Traditional Landscapes”

- Sub theme A: Traditional landscapes and vernacular architecture: resource for cultural tourism
- Sub theme B: Benefits from preservation of cultural landscapes and vernacular architecture

The location for the CIAV 2007 Annual Conference, in Banaue, Ifugao Province in the Philippines is appropriate since the site is one of the few places in the world where a continuing traditional landscape is preserved within the context of both the natural and cultural environment.

Three sites chosen for the conference case study are the World Heritage terrace clusters of Bangaan, Batad, and Mayoyao. In these sites are seen the cultural manifestations of traditional landscapes – in the ceremonies and rituals, in the traditional architecture, engineering, environmental practices, and in the agriculture practiced by the people, a true nature-culture continuum.

These sites, inscribed in the World Heritage List as the Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras, have been listed in the World Heritage In Danger List. In the most recent WH mission conducted on the property, actions and benchmarks have been set to remove it from the WH List in Danger, one of the more relevant actions being the *“Immediate implementation of the Conservation and Management Plan, with focus on community based activities such as zoning and land use plans responding to traditional value systems and providing regulations over tourism and infrastructure development.”*

It is hoped that this meeting will generate information useful to the Philippine government in addressing issues related to the site. The outcome of the discussions on the topic of traditional landscapes and their sustainable use as a resource for cultural tourism could help identify key issues and recommend solutions that lead to the realization of action plans resulting in achieving benchmarks set by UNESCO to remove the site from the World Heritage List in Danger.

Ifugao Province is among the more impoverished areas in the Philippines. It is further hoped that the meeting will improve the living conditions of the stakeholders by teaching conservation procedures to be undertaken by local residents, and that the traditional landscape they live in becomes a resource for sustainable cultural tourism programs.

ICOMOS Philippines invites CIAV members to participate in this event. *Following the Eger-Xian Principles and the spirit of encouraging cross-fertilization between ICOMOS Scientific Committees, ICTC members are invited to participate as observers and to contribute their expertise to the issues on hand. Other ICOMOS members and specialists concerned with this issue are also cordially invited to attend.*

The following are the objectives of the conference/workshop:

- provide participants with a forum to exchange opinions and concerns on the issues pertaining to the preservation and management of traditional landscapes;
- based on issues and concerns presented related to the traditional landscapes of Ifugao, to elaborate on existing issues, concerns, strategies and action plans that address the preservation and management of Ifugao traditional landscapes, which could in turn help in the achievement of the benchmarks and recommendations of the WH Committee to remove the WH site from the WH List in Danger;
- to formulate a program that teaches the local community how to implement sustainable preservation methods and to use their traditional landscape as a resource for additional economic activity to alleviate poverty

Case studies may discuss the following themes:

- Are traditional landscapes still viable in the 21st century?
- Development of traditional landscapes as a result of man's response in his adaptation to his natural or urban environment
- What are issues, concerns, and challenges regarding the preservation and management of traditional landscapes in the 21st century?
- What are sustainable development measures that aid in the preservation of traditional landscapes?
- Collaborative partnerships in favor of the preservation of traditional landscapes;
- Use of traditional landscape and vernacular architecture as a resource for cultural tourism

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRESENTATIONS**

### **ABSTRACT:**

- A 1-page abstract is to be submitted on or before 1 September 2007-05-29, emailed to the Selection Committee at [icomos.ph@gmail.com](mailto:icomos.ph@gmail.com)
- Notification of selection shall be made by 15 September 2007

### **PRESENTATION:**

- For selected presentations, a 10-page paper is requested to be submitted to the Selection Committee on or before 15 November 2007.

For any questions, please contact the

**ICOMOS PHILIPPINE COMMITTEE**

[icomos.ph@gmail.com](mailto:icomos.ph@gmail.com)



*Photo of Batad Heritage Cluster site, Ifugao by MJBMananghaya*